130. Admission of all Hindus into Sirkar temples.

Mr. C. V. Kunjuraman (Member, Nominated) began by thanking the Government for allowing the discussion of the question of entry into temples this year as a special case. The subject in question was not connected with religion but was social. Ezhavas were admitting Pulayas and Parayas into their temple at Sivagiri and their claim to enter Sirkar temples was legitimate. Untouchability was at the root of his community being denied the right of entering Sirkar temples. There was no question of untouchability in the Assembly Hall, in the Colleges or in the Public Offices. Its application to the temples was based on prejudice and superstition. His Highness the Maha Raja Gaekwar of Baroda had issued a Proclamation in favour of entry into public temples by all classes. The Travancore Government themselves allowed Chakkala Nairs admission into the temples some six years back. The enlightened members of the caste Hindu communities also favoured the aspirations of the Ezhavas in this matter as evidenced by the large number of signatories to the memorial presented by Mr. Padmanabha Pillai of Changanacheri. Ezhavas had a right to enter the temples even if it was decided that the position of the Government in respect of them was only that of a trustee, because the Oorallers who managed the temples in the past were only the representatives of all the Hindus in the village and not of caste Hindus alone.

In the circumstances, the Member requested that the institution of untouchability be removed and that Ezhavas be given access to all public temples in the State.

Mr. T. K. Kittan (Member, Nominated) endorsed the views given expression to by Mr. C. V. Kunjuraman in all that he said regarding the admission of all Hindus into Sirkar temples. The Ezhava community felt the evil effects of the system of caste more poignantly than other depressed classes. They were making headway in material progress in spite of many obstacles. The community was really suffering considerable hardship from the institution of unapproachability rigidly kept alive in north Travancore which prevented them from using the public roads and schools situated near temples. If entry into temples was allowed to them, their grievance in the matter of untouchability would be completely removed. Students belonging to all castes were freely associating with one another in all public educational institutions. The Member prayed that this principle might be extended a little further and the members of his community be permitted to enter all Sirkar temples for worship. He added that, in the temples belonging to his community, Pulayas, Parayas and other classes were being freely admitted. The members of the higher classes were also sympathising with them in their request for admission into the temples. No doubt their representation was not susceptible of an immediate answer, but it should receive the sympathetic consideration of Government.

Dewan's reply.—I am glad that the Members recognise that this is a matter which does not admit of an immediate answer, and I see that you want only a considered reply. A considered reply will be given in due course.

131. Report of the Devaswom Separation Committee and Devaswoms under the management of Government.

Mr. Trivikramar Vasudevar (Member, Jenmi, Padmanabhapuram Division) said that the separation of Devaswoms from the Land Revenue Department was an important subject and that, in view of the fact that the Devaswoms were first assumed by a Christian Dewan and that there were only two Hindu members on the Devaswom Separation Committee, the orders of Government had to be passed after careful consideration and on such lines as would satisfy the aspirations of all the communities concerned. The intentions of the founders of the institutions should not be ignored, nor should the promises given by Government be violated. The trust property in the hands of the Government should be now separated. As regards the question of throwing open the temples to all classes of people for purposes of worship, the Member said that it was governed by long-standing custom and usage

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and that they should not be lightly interfered with. Perfect equality of status was not attained anywhere even in the advanced countries of the world and hence there should not be any undue hurry in passing orders on the question of temple entry.

132. Desirability of transferring the management of Devaswoms to trustees as in British India.

Mr. Kanakku Maharaja Pillai Sivatanu Pillai (Member, Tovala Taluk) submittted that the temples which were founded and managed by Hindus in the past were assumed by the Sirkar and administered in the most careless manner. Many temples had fallen into disrepair, the jewels of some temples had been stolen and had not been satisfactorily traced and the *Tantries* and the *Santhicars* could lay no claim to a knowledge of the necessary rituals. Tahsildars did not find time to attend to the administration of the temples, the temple subordinates were corrupt, and it had become a *mamool* to minister to the comforts of circuiting officers from the proceeds of the Devaswoms. In view to remove this deplorable state of affairs, the Member advocated the transfer of the management of the Devaswoms to the trustees or Dharmakartas as in British India and said that this would effect a saving in the expenditure of Government.

Dewan's reply.—I have already stated in my address that orders will issue soon in regard to the separation of Devaswoms. So, it will not be expedient to say anything more just now. All the points raised by you and the previous speakers on the subject have been duly considered and will be further examined before final orders are passed.

IX. MISCELLANEOUS.—*(Continued.)*

133. The grievances of the Chalias.

Mr. V. S. Ramaswami (Member, Nominated) said that the Chalia community were being very much handicapped by several adverse circumstances the chief of which was the lack of capital to purchase machinery and raw materials to carry on their trade. They had at present to depend on others for help. The suggestion made to afford them the much-needed relief was that looms should be purchased for them by Government, the cost being recovered in convenient instalments. The Member stated that the chief obstacle in the matter of their education was their inability to pay the High School fees. He, therefore, prayed that their boys might be given the half-fee concession which some educationally backward communities enjoyed.

Referring to the Weaving School at Nagercoil, he pleaded for the better working of the institution so that it might be a training ground in that important industry.

His further prayer was that the Government might be pleased to help them in purchasing agricultural implements by realising from them the cost in instalments. The Director of Agriculture had promised to help them in that matter. He also requested similar concessions in the matter of education and employment.

Dewan's reply.—In the first place, you want a depôt where looms and their parts should be stocked and sold. Orders have already issued in regard to stocking and selling loom accessories and parts. If you want looms to be given to enable people to buy them, those looms will not fall under the Agricultural Loans Rules. Such loans will have to be granted by the Government under separate orders or by Co-operative Societies. We shall see what help can be given in the matter.

As regards the Weaving School at Nagercoil, orders have issued for the purchase of warping and sizing machines. We are waiting for the return of Mr. Padmanabha Pillai who has been deputed to England for training in weaving and dyeing. The Director of Industries cannot possibly have an intimate knowledge of all industries, and when Mr. Padmanabha Pillai returns from England, the development of weaving will, I hope, be given a further push.

In regard to Government appointments, I shall hear the other speakers who intend speaking on the same subject and then give my reply.

As regards the question of fee concession, I have already given my reply.

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